

## Nuclear Gauge Permit Holders; Are you planning to retire in the near future?

What will become of your nuclear gauges and nuclear gauge permit? Under the RSS tracking and surveillance system, a nuclear gauge must be listed on a permit, and must be associated with the permit holder's name. If our office is not given



the name of a new permit holder candidate, or the name of another permit holder to take over the gauges, then we have no choice but to keep the retired person's permit active in our system. This, of course, causes a lot of frustration for everyone. This is something to think about for any gauge permit holder who is considering retirement.

It is a good idea to line-up a new permit holder candidate as part of your retirement plan. The candidate should submit a new permit application to our office as soon as possible after the permit holder decides to retire. The new permit holder often turns out to be one of the associate users listed on the permit.

## Liquid Scintillation Counter Source Disposal Concerns

Liquid scintillation counters contain a small radioactive source (the external standard source) used to verify the system counting efficiency.

Recently an LSC was sent to surplus by a researcher who had terminated her radiation source use permit. Since no one had indicated an immediate need for the unit, the counter was crushed and sent to a landfill. This loss of control is reportable to the Nuclear Regulatory Commission. In addition to the small sealed source, several pounds of lead shielding were also sent to the landfill.

All liquid scintillation counters, whether they are operable or not, must remain

under the control of the Permit Holder or the LRPO until the LSC has been shipped to another authorized individual or until the source has been removed by an authorized service representative.

If you need to dispose of a Beckman counter, their current telephone number is 800-742-2345. Select Option 2-Service. There is a minimal cost associated with this service. Contact the RSS if you have a different LSC that requires a source removal.

After the source is disposed, proper disposal of the lead shielding must be accomplished prior to sending the unit to a landfill.

## LRPO Training and Irradiator Operator Training Course to be Presented

Once again the Radiation Safety Staff will be offering training for Location Radiation Protection Officers and for Irradiator Operators at Texas A&M University in College Station, Texas. The course dates are June 7-11, 2004. Anyone interested in attending either of these courses should contact Jack Patterson for additional information.

## Having a Safety Conference?

If you are planning a conference or meeting of safety personnel or radioactive material users, RSS would like to join in the fun. We realize the importance of interacting with our users and safety personnel involved in the radiation safety program. We have participated in ARS, APHIS, FS, and FSIS conferences and forums, both large and small. It's a chance for us to interact with field personnel, answer questions, help resolve problems, and get ideas on how to improve the USDA radiation safety program. Contact the Director or your Health Physicist if you want us to attend.

### APHIS X-Ray Transfers

About 25 permit holders and 100 x-ray units were transferred out of APHIS and over to the Department of Homeland Security where the International Port Baggage Inspection Program now resides. RSS terminated the permits and cancelled film badge service for these former APHIS employees. RSS directed former APHIS employees to the Customs and Border Protection Radiation Safety Office for help with DHS program requirements. APHIS has retained x-ray baggage inspection units at some ports for special inspection programs.

## Is this you ?????

**Scenario:** Your lab has a standing order for an aliquot of P-32 to be delivered every Friday. You request your approval number via e-mail on Thursday with RSS. You receive your approved RSS-83 form and await your delivery. Your order is received, properly checked in, monitored, and recorded in your log. You immediately use the shipment in an experiment and all of it is consumed.

*Some time later...* you receive your unsealed inventory audit from RSS. The "date received" column is blank. There is a request for you to submit the RSS-83 form for those shipments. Your technician resigned two months ago and you don't have the forms. You have no idea where he may have put them and the only information you have is your research log.

**What's wrong?** Receipt and disposal of your order should have been documented on the RSS-83 form and sent to RSS after each process. To resolve this dilemma, contact RSS to request copies of the RSS83 forms for the shipments in question and fill in the requested fields from your research log.

**Fact:** You are required to retain records of purchase

and transfer of radioisotopes for 3 years.

The retention period for disposal of radioisotopes is indefinite. The purpose of the RSS-83 form is to document request, receipt, and disposal of radioisotopes; therefore you need to retain this form indefinitely.

You may request a duplicate RSS-83 for any shipment at any time. The RSS-83 form needs to be transmitted to our office upon receipt of your radioisotope and again upon disposal.

Additionally, you are required to have these records available for inspection purposes. The retention guidelines for all records are available in Section 6 of the Radiation Safety Handbook available at our website: [www.rss.usda.gov](http://www.rss.usda.gov).

## RSMS Update

Progress testing the new, web-based radiation safety information system is ongoing, though not moving as fast as we would like. We still expect to release the new system to all users this year. The new system will handle almost all record keeping and reporting needs in our radiation safety program. We look forward to working with you to improve the way we do business together.

## **Inspections Performed**

- ARS/Athens, GA
- ARS/Florence, SC
- AMS/Gastonia, NC
- ARS/Parlier, CA
- ARS/Riverside, CA
- ARS/Shaftner, CA
- ARS/Wyndmoor, PA
- FS/Asheville, NC
- FS/Athens, GA
- FS/Lakeview, OR
- FS/Riverside, CA
- FS/Yreka, CA
- FSIS/Athens, GA
- NRCS/Bloomfield, IA
- NRCS/Petersburg, WV
- NRCS/Sioux City, IA

Significant findings: No violations were noted during these inspections. Recommendations to improve the records management systems used to maintain required files were made at two locations. Recommendation to dispose of unused ECDs were also

## **Inspections Pending**

The following locations are scheduled for routine inspections in the next few months:

- APHIS/Fort Collins, CO
- ARS/Baton Rouge, LA
- ARS/Cheyenne, WY
- ARS/Fort Collins, CO
- ARS/Fort Detrick, MD
- ARS/Fort Pierce, FL
- ARS/APHIS/Plum Island, NY
- ARS/Gainesville, FL
- ARS/Houma, LA
- ARS/East Lansing, MI
- ARS/New Orleans, LA
- FS/Delaware, OH
- FS/Fort Collins, CO
- GIPSA/Kansas City, MO
- NRCS/Casper, WY
- NRCS/Colby, KS
- NRCS/Horton, KS
- NRCS/Parkersburg, WV
- NRCS/Rapid City, SD
- NRCS/Riverhead, NY
- NRCS/Strong City, KS

## **How to Contact the Radiation Safety Staff**

**Web Site:** [www.rss.usda.gov](http://www.rss.usda.gov)

**Phone Number:** 301-504-2440

**Fax Number:** 301-504-2450

**Mailing Address:**  
USDA  
Radiation Safety Staff  
5601 Sunnyside Avenue  
Mail Stop 5510  
Beltsville, MD 20705

# 2004 Schedule of Programs

## Quarterly Lab Survey Schedule

Quarterly Report Period	Mailout Target Date	Due Date
1 <sup>st</sup> Cycle	January 20, 2004	February 27, 2004
2 <sup>nd</sup> Cycle	April 19, 2004	May 21, 2004
3 <sup>rd</sup> Cycle	July 19, 2004	August 20, 2004
4 <sup>th</sup> Cycle	October 18, 2004	November 19, 2004

## Associate Users Audit

Year	Mailout Target Date	Due Date
2004	June 7, 2004	July 9, 2004

## Leak Test Schedule

Mailout Cycle	Mailout Target Date	Due Date
1 <sup>st</sup> Leak Test	January 20, 2004	February 27, 2004
2 <sup>nd</sup> Leak Test	July 19, 2004	August 20, 2004

## X-Ray Producing Equipment Annual Inventory Audit

Year	Mailout Target Date	Due Date
2004	June 7, 2004	July 9, 2004

## Sealed Source Inventory Audit

Audit Period	Mailout Target Date	Due Date
1 <sup>st</sup> Inventory Audit	February 9, 2004	March 12, 2004
2 <sup>nd</sup> Inventory Audit	August 9, 2004	September 10, 2004

## Irradiator Survey

Survey Period	Mailout Target Date	Due Date
1 <sup>st</sup> Survey	January 20, 2004	February 20, 2004
2 <sup>nd</sup> Survey	July 12, 2004	August 13, 2004

## LRPO Radioactive Waste Manifests

Survey Period	Mailout Target Date	Due Date
1 <sup>st</sup> Survey	February 9, 2004	March 12, 2004
2 <sup>nd</sup> Survey	August 9, 2004	September 10, 2004

## Incineration Report

Audit Period	Mailout Target Date	Due Date
1 <sup>st</sup> Inventory Audit	February 16, 2004	March 19, 2004
2 <sup>nd</sup> Inventory Audit	May 10, 2004	June 11, 2004
3 <sup>rd</sup> Inventory Audit	August 9, 2004	September 10, 2004
4 <sup>th</sup> Inventory Audit	November 15, 2004	December 17, 2004

## Unsealed Inventory

Inventory Period	Mailout Target Date	Due Date
1 <sup>st</sup> Inventory Audit	April 5, 2004	May 7, 2004
2 <sup>nd</sup> Inventory Audit	September 6, 2004	October 8, 2004